

703 KAR 5:120. Assistance for schools; guidelines for scholastic audit.

RELATES TO: KRS 158.6451, 158.6453, 158.6455, 158.782, 158.805

STATUTORY AUTHORITY: KRS 156.029, 156.070, 158.6453, 158.6455

NECESSITY, FUNCTION, AND CONFORMITY: KRS 158.6455 requires the Kentucky Board of Education to adopt administrative regulations relating to assistance to improve teaching and learning for a school that has an index score that places it below the assistance line and relating to the guidelines for conducting scholastic audits. This administrative regulation establishes standards for assistance to schools and for conducting scholastic audits.

Section 1. (1) A Level 1 school shall conduct a scholastic review and self-study facilitated by the district's professional development coordinator with assistance provided by Kentucky Department of Education (KDE) staff. The chairperson shall be appointed by the Commissioner of Education in consultation with the superintendent. The chairperson shall be responsible for:

- (a) The notification of the school community that the review will take place and a process for written comments;
 - (b) The coordination of the site visitation;
 - (c) The facilitation of the process;
 - (d) The facilitation of a meeting with district staff prior to the review visit;
 - (e) The drafting of the report;
 - (f) The delivery of the final report to the local school board members, superintendent, principal and the school council members within three (3) weeks of completing the scholastic review.
- (2) A Level 1 school may be eligible to receive Commonwealth school improvement funds. The school council shall decide whether to accept or decline Commonwealth school improvement funds. If the council chooses to decline, the principal shall notify the local board of education of the council's decision.
- (3) To involve stakeholders in identifying priorities for school improvement planning, the school principal, in collaboration with the other school council members, shall notify parents and interested community members of the findings and recommendations of the review team. The findings shall be presented and discussed on the agenda of the next scheduled school council meeting and at a local board of education meeting.

(4) A Level 1 scholastic review and self study team:

- (a) Shall use the "Standards and Indicators for School Improvement" to evaluate the school's learning environment, efficiency, and academic performance;
- (b) Shall make recommendations to improve teaching and learning for inclusion in the existing comprehensive school improvement plan; and
- (c) May review the district's certified employee evaluation plan and make recommendations regarding the implementation of the professional growth and evaluation plan and process used by the school.

Section 2. (1) A Level 2 school shall receive a scholastic review facilitated and chaired by a designee of the Commissioner of Education with assistance from the district's central office staff. The chairperson shall be responsible for:

- (a) The notification of the school community and a process for written comments;
- (b) The coordination of the site visitation;
- (c) The facilitation of the process;
- (d) The facilitation of a meeting with district staff prior to the audit visit.

(e) The drafting of the report;

(f) The delivery of the final report to the local school board members, superintendent, principal and the school council members within three (3) weeks of completing the scholastic review; and

(2) A Level 2 school may be eligible to receive Commonwealth school improvement funds. The school council shall decide whether to accept or decline Commonwealth school improvement funds. If the council chooses to decline, the principal shall notify the local board of education of the council's decision.

(3) To involve stakeholders in identifying priorities for school improvement planning, the school principal, in collaboration with the other school council members, shall notify parents and interested community members of the findings and recommendations of the review team. The findings shall be presented and discussed on the agenda of the next scheduled school council meeting and at a local board of education meeting.

(4) A Level 2 scholastic review shall:

(a) Use the "Standards and Indicators for School Improvement" to evaluate the school's learning environment, efficiency, and academic performance;

(b) Make recommendations to improve teaching and learning for inclusion in the existing comprehensive school improvement plan; and

(c) Review the district's certified employee evaluation plan and make recommendations regarding the implementation of the professional growth and evaluation plan and process used by the school.

Section 3. A Level 3 school shall receive education assistance from a highly skilled educator under KRS 158.782 and a scholastic audit. A Level 3 school shall be eligible to receive Commonwealth school improvement funds under KRS 158.805. In order for a Level 3 school to decline to accept Commonwealth school improvement funds, the approval of the school council shall be required and the local board of education shall be notified of the decision.

Section 4. Evaluation of school personnel in a Level 3 school shall address the following:

(1) The district's evaluation plan and process for certified staff shall be reviewed and recommendations made on the implementation of the evaluation plan and process used by the school;

(2) A person responsible for evaluating certified personnel, including the certified members of the audit team, shall have fulfilled the training requirements as described in KRS 156.101 and 704 KAR 3:345;

(3) The qualified members of the audit team shall submit written recommendations for additional staff evaluations to be conducted by the certified administrator charged with evaluation. If additional evaluations are required, the certified administrator charged with evaluation, in collaboration with the assigned highly skilled educator, shall submit a progress report to the district and the KDE within six (6) months of the initial report. Based on the findings, under KRS 156.132, the Commissioner of Education may recommend to the local superintendent that:

(a) The principal, who is identified by the audit as in need of additional evaluation but who does not respond to the professional growth plan as identified in 704 KAR 3:345, be dismissed, demoted, or transferred; and

(b) A teacher, who is identified by the audit as in need of additional evaluation but who does not respond to the professional growth plan, be dismissed or transferred.

Section 5. (1) If a school is classified as a Level 3 school for two (2) consecutive biennia, a student attending the Level 3 school may transfer to a school with an accountability index above its assistance line within the district or if none is available, a school with an accountability index above its assistance line outside the district. No later than thirty (30) days before the start of the next school year the student shall submit the transfer request to the superintendent.

(2) The superintendent shall select the receiving successful school in the home district or make arrangements with a neighboring district with the student transfer to be effective beginning with the next school year after the school is classified as a Level 3 school for two (2) consecutive biennia. If two (2) districts cannot agree, the superintendent of the student's resident district shall request the Commissioner of Education to resolve the issue and make a decision on the placement of the student.

(3) The school district in which the student is enrolled shall retain the SEEK funding, and the student's resident district shall be responsible for all transportation costs incurred as a result of a student transferring.

Section 6. If a school is classified as Level 3, a scholastic audit team may request the Commissioner of Education to recommend to a local board of education the removal of a school council member under KRS 160.347.

Section 7. (1) Members of the scholastic audit team shall be selected and trained from a pool of candidates who have submitted an application to the Department of Education (KDE). The training shall include:

- (a) Developing, implementing, and evaluating a comprehensive consolidated school improvement plan that communicates a clear purpose, direction and action plan focused on improved teaching and learning;
- (b) Building capacity for school leadership at all levels that promotes instructional decisions resulting in active support for teaching and learning and sustained continuous improvement;
- (c) Organizing the school to maximize use of all available resources to support high student and staff performance within a safe environment;
- (d) Using time efficiently and effectively to maximize teaching and learning;
- (e) Providing and supporting research-based, results driven professional development opportunities for all staff to improve staff and student learning;
- (f) Building relationships and collaborative networks, open communication, and active engagement of all stakeholders;
- (g) Attending to the evidence as to whether the individual needs of students are being met and assessing equitable access to the entire curriculum;
- (h) Using resources effectively to eliminate barriers to learning and providing the appropriate support structures to meet the needs of all students;
- (i) Using technology and other resources as an integral part of an effective, educational program to improve teaching and learning;
- (j) Developing and learning how to assess an effective learning community;
- (k) Developing and implementing an effective, responsive curriculum that is rigorous, intentional, articulated, integrated and aligned to state standards established under KRS 158.645, 158.6451, and 703 KAR 4:060;
- (l) Developing and learning how to assess an instructional program that actively engages all students by employing varied research-based practices to improve academic performance;
- (m) Developing and learning to utilize multiple evaluation and assessment strategies to monitor and modify instruction;
- (n) Conducting professional growth and evaluation of certified personnel;
- (o) Assessing and advising compliance with Kentucky's statutory and regulatory requirements for schools and school districts;
- (p) Understanding and assessing the fiscal relationship between schools and districts with respect to resource allocation and integration; and
- (q) Understanding strategies for achievement gap reduction.

(2) The scholastic audit team shall consist of the following members:

- (a) A highly skilled educator selected under KRS 158.782;
- (b) An active or retired teacher who has not been under full-time contract in the district in which the school is being audited;
- (c) An active or retired principal or other school-level administrator who has not been under full-time contract in the district in which the school is being audited;
- (d) An active or retired district level administrator who has not been under full-time contract in the district in which the school is being audited;

(e) A parent or legal guardian who has or has had a school-aged child and resides outside the district which includes the school being audited; and

(f) An active or retired university faculty member.

(3) The Commissioner of Education or his designee shall name a highly skilled educator with administrative certification and experience, an experienced certified administrator member of the audit team, or a similarly qualified state-designated agent to serve as chairperson of the scholastic audit team. The chairperson shall be responsible for:

(a) The notification of the school community and a process for written comments;

(b) The coordination of the site visitation;

(c) The facilitation of the process;

(d) The facilitation of a meeting with district staff prior to the audit visit;

(e) The drafting of the report; and

(f) The delivery of the final report to the KDE, local school board members, superintendent, principal and the school council members.

(4) Prior to the scholastic audit, the school principal, in collaboration with the other members of the school council, shall prepare a school portfolio for use in creating a profile of the strengths and limitations of the school's instructional and organizational effectiveness. Evidence as to the current levels of instructional and organizational effectiveness shall be indicated in the identification of priorities for school improvement in the comprehensive school improvement plan.

(5) A school's learning environment, efficiency, and student academic performance shall be evaluated by using the scholastic audit team using "Standards and Indicators For School Improvement".

(6) The scholastic audit team shall:

(a) Make recommendations for assistance;

(b) Share a draft report with the school faculty and school council members prior to the scholastic audit team's departure; and

(c) Submit a final exit report, within three (3) weeks following the site visit, to the KDE, local school board members, superintendent, principal, and the school council members, regarding:

1. The appropriateness of the classification based upon audit findings;

2. Specific recommendations to improve teaching and learning for inclusion into the existing comprehensive school improvement plan;

3. The evaluation of school-based decision-making council decisions in the critical instructional areas under KRS 160.345(2)(d)(i) and (3)(c);

4. The evaluation of the effectiveness of the principal as the instructional leader, in the areas of efficiency, learning environment, and academic performance;

5. The identification of certified staff, including administrators, needing further performance evaluations to the primary evaluator as defined in KRS 156.101(6)(c)2;

6. The assistance and resources required to revise the consolidated school improvement plan; and

7. The identification of priorities and strategies, which the school or district may adopt to support the improvement effort.

(7) To involve stakeholders in identifying priorities for school improvement planning, the school principal, in collaboration with the other school council members, shall notify parents and interested community members of the findings and recommendations of the audit team. The audit findings shall be presented and discussed on the agenda of the next scheduled school council meeting and at a local board of education meeting.

(8) School improvement plans shall be based upon:

(a) Recommendations from the audit team's exit report for improving teaching and learning that shall be incorporated into the existing comprehensive school improvement plan submitted to the district and the KDE; and

(b) Specific, research-based standards and indicators of quality as found in "Standards and Indicators for School Improvement" so all school and district consolidated plans are linked to the critical elements of the scholastic audit process and focused on improving student academic performance.

(9) The process for amending a school plan shall be a local decision, beginning with the approval by the school council.

(10) An amendment to a school plan shall be shared at the district level so district personnel can determine if the amendment results in a need for reallocation of discretionary resources and an adjustment or formal amendment to the district plan.

Section 8. (1) A principal of a school classified as a Level 3 shall participate in at least twelve (12) hours of professional development activities which may include opportunities for coaching and mentoring. The focus shall be on building leadership skills in student academic performance, learning environment, and organizational efficiency as measured by the "Standards and Indicators for School Improvement". The participation shall occur within twelve (12) months of being classified as a Level 3 school. The professional development activities shall be designed and delivered by the KDE and the local district in accordance with KRS 156.101.

(2) A principal of a school classified as a Level 1 or Level 2 shall participate in at least twelve (12) hours of professional development activities which may include opportunities for coaching and mentoring. The focus shall be on building leadership skills in student academic performance, learning environment, and organizational efficiency as measured by the "Standards and Indicators for School Improvement". The participation shall occur within twelve (12) months of being classified as a Level 1 or Level 2 school. The professional development activities shall be designed and delivered by the KDE or the local district in accordance with KRS 156.101.

Section 9. The KDE shall conduct scholastic audits in a random sample of schools.

Section 10. Incorporation by Reference. (1) The "Standards and Indicators for School Improvement", dated March 30, 2000, is hereby incorporated by reference.

(2) This document may be inspected, obtained, and copied at Office of Leadership and School Improvement, Department of Education, Capital Plaza Tower, 500 Mero Street, Frankfort, Kentucky, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. through 4:30 p.m. (26-2:120; 26 Ky.R. 2120; eff. 8-23-2000; 30 Ky.R. 2120; 1845; 2302; eff. 4-17-04.)